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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 028303

EXDIS

SUBJ: JOURNALISTS' INTRUSION LONG TIENG

REF: STATE 028056

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FOLLOWING IS TEXT UPI DISPATCH OF FEBRUARY 25: QUOTE

"WASHINGTON--SEN. STUART SYMINGTON, D-MO., ASKED THE STATE DEPARTMENT TODAY TO DIRECT THE US AMBASSADOR IN LAOS TO RETURN TO WASHINGTON IMMEDIATELY TO TESTIFY ON THE DETENTION OF TWO AMERICAN NEWSMEN.

"SYMINGTON JOINED SENATE DEMOCRATIC LEADER MIKE MANSFIELD, MONT., IN SHARPLY CRITICIZING AMBASSADOR G. MCMURTRIE GODLEY FOR REPORTEDLY SAYING 'THE AMERICAN MISSION HAS LOST ANY INTEREST IN HELPING OUT THE PRESS WHATSOEVER' AS A RESULT OF THE INCIDENT.

"THE AMERICAN NEWSMEN AND A FRENCH REPORTER WERE DETAINED OVERNIGHT AT A BASE NORTH OF VIENTIANE AFTER THEY TRIED TO REACH AN 'OFF LIMITS' OUTPOST.

"SYMINGTON, IN A LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE ROGERS, REQUESTED THAT GODLEY 'BE DIRECTED TO RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE' TO APPEAR BEFORE SYMINGTON'S FOREIGN RELATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON



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NATIONAL COMMITMENTS.

"THE MISSOURI SENATOR, WHO HAS BEEN BATTLING THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR MONTHS ABOUT ITS CENSORSHIP OF HIS HEARINGS ON LAOS, SAID IT WAS EVIDENT THAT EVEN THE TRICKLE OF INFORMATION FROM LAOS BY AMERICAN NEWSMEN IS NOW TO BE IMPEDED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT." END QUOTE

WE SHALL SEND TEXT AS SOON AS AVAILABLE. WE UNDERSTAND FROM UNCONFIRMED INFORMATION THAT YOUR APPEARANCE, IF YOU RETURN, WOULD BE MORE RELATED TO LAOS POLICY AND OPERATIONS THAN TO SIDE ISSUE OF NEWSMEN.
ROGERS

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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